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New England, and the visitor is repaid in the actual sensation that viewing it engenders. The intrepid colonel riding at the head of his colored regiment seems to bear in the very expression of his countenance a vision of what was so soon to follow. One can almost hear the shuffling of the heavy boots as the dusky line swings along. How marvelously the types have been studied! Here are black men from the Congo and from the upper Nile; the sons and descendants of imported slaves marching to set their brethren at liberty. There is a purpose in every face; a dignity of motive. The marvelous handling of the subject has prevented the composition of so many figures from being crowded, and the story is told there. The sense of dramatic values is not absent. The men who fell at Fort Wagner in that gallant charge one sees here face to face. "He is buried with his niggers," was the reply sent back by the Confederates when attempts were made to secure the body of their Colonel. And the mounted figure with the drawn sword is that of a man who

would accept with pride such a final resting-place. Of all the soldiers monuments the Shaw Memorial stands pre-eminent. The Farragut and the Sherman statues in New York and the Logan Statue in Chicago, splendid as they are, do not give the effect or cause the sensations that this tribute to the black regiment evokes. It is in a class by itself. But sculptors like Saint Gaudens are epoch-makers in the history of a nation's art. The average sculptor possesses no such talent or individuality. Commissioned by some historical association or society to design a monumental work he is too apt to reproduce the conventional or to attempt to satisfy the views of men of little artistic knowledge or perceptions. It is one of the duties of art commissions, formed of men who are competent to judge the fitting and the well-done; to see that, in the future, memorials shall possess a higher excellence of workmanship and composition, and, if possible, to see that many of the prominent "hideosities" be removed and something more dignified and fitting take their place.

## OVERDRESSED ROOMS

BY JOHN QUINCY ADAMS

**T**HERE are few situations in which one feels more helpless than in selecting furniture and arranging it in the home. In a great department store or "furniture emporium" the customer is as much at sea as a passenger washed overboard in mid-ocean. Having no trustworthy compass of taste, how shall the purchaser steer a wise course in this bewildering flood of household objects? In this perplexity one is apt to be guided by the price—which is the only familiar landmark, and picking out the highest-priced article one can afford, be persuaded that it is the most beautiful. No matter what other qualities the object may boast of, appearances must be in its favor. Its material may be counterfeit; its design clumsy; its workmanship faulty, but its

symbols of costliness must be many and conspicuous.

To meet this demand, furniture makers spend much effort in multiplying these symbols, well knowing that the world is still deceived by ornament. Such a piece of furniture is only a gazing-stock, whose appendages and trimmings are to amaze the ignorant. It is but a hodge-podge sitting in art's accustomed seat. The buyer would soon lose his embarrassment in the presence of these pretenders if he or she asked them the meaning of their tawdry badges. Confusion arises because their titles are not called in question, meaningless forms being dignified with the name of decoration.

As a human being depends upon his bones and muscles for his grace and

dignity, and a tree upon its trunk and branches, so the utility and beauty of every piece of furniture rests upon its structural lines. Obliterate a man's structural lines by a few hundred pounds of fat and, while he may arouse our curiosity, he has lost his grace and comeliness. If the tree is covered with huge abnormal growths, the character and majesty of the oak are gone. In like manner to cover up the structural lines of a chair with turnings, contortions, and bulges lessens its usefulness and destroys its beauty. If the structural lines are awkward no amount of ornament can make them graceful, but a beautiful form is improved by true decoration. Thomas Chippendale made his furniture so that its open spaces are beautiful outlined against the wall. Very little modern furniture can submit to this simple test with self respect.

The touchstone for finding the genuine decoration amidst the heaps of rubbish is the simple question: Wherefore? If it answers that its purposes is display; is to show off itself; to be conspicuous, we know it is counterfeit. But if its sole end is to enhance the beauty of the object it clings to, it is genuine. Does it change the shape and pervert the structural lines or does it give them added grace and charm? For decoration, like charity, "Vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, and doth not behave itself unseemly."

Let a customer boldly face the gilt and glamour of the mob of household mountebanks, neither overawed by their pretentious attire, nor browbeaten by their advocates; let him cross-question them as to the purpose of their ornament and he will find most of them too confused to give an intelligent answer, and common sense will pronounce them guilty of the offences of counterfeiting, self-exhibition, and false-pretense. If shorn of its ostentatious ornaments the naked structural form of one of these objects will be in the plight of the animal of the fable when stripped of the lion's skin—a braying vulgarity.

Our stores are filled with these hideous usurpers made in the name of ornament, but they only bear witness that symbols of costliness have overrun the domain of

decoration. But the store is not their abiding place. Drifting along in the currents of trade, one by one they are caught up by swirls of desire or wavelets of sentimentality and gathered into our houses in heaps. There, high and dry, on floor, walls, mantel or other resting place they lodge like purposeless driftwood. Each piece is elbowed by a motley rabble. The onyx or Delft clock finds itself intrenched by vases, glass lamps, candlesticks, flower pots, photograph holders, calendars, statuettes, cups and saucers; but why enumerate further? The reader has but to lift his eyes or consult his experience for a cloud of witnesses. Some of these things are beautiful, even masterpieces of art, but as Lowell says:

"Roots, wood, bark and leaves, singly  
perfect maybe  
But clapt hodge-podge together, they  
don't make a tree."

Furniture comes into the house subject to one of the two motives which governed the design and manufacture of its ornament. It is either put on exhibition or used for decoration. The former is its common destiny. It is displayed because it is pretty, "cute" or curious; because it is a gift, or more commonly still, simply because it is in the house and the housewife does not know what else to do with it. Whatever its character or however useless, it has a vested right to a place in the room, though where it shall be hung or set is determined by chance, caprice or available space. Each object being put up to show off itself, its relation to the other things in the room need not be considered. The room can thus be arranged without scheme or plan. No serious thought is demanded, hence the exhibition method is the refuge of the lazy. Each article is just set, laid or hung wherever a convenient place can be made for it, exactly as though the room were a commonplace museum in which the chief purpose is not to decorate the room, but to show off the objects.

If the family want a home, let them choose with wisdom and group with care a few harmonious objects. When an object is used in the decoration of a room,

a plan must be followed—thought and care used in selecting and placing each object whose primary duty is not to show itself but to enhance the beauty and harmony of the room. In decoration, the fundamental principle is harmony. As a musician cannot produce beautiful harmony by thoughtlessly bunching sounds, even though each is beautiful in itself, neither can harmony be produced thus in any field of art. Even in the kitchen this law holds sway. No normal person makes a meal of salt, of pepper, or of eggs, but these combined in right proportions make a very palatable dish. The importance of harmony is recognized and exemplified in the preparation and serving of all foods. This is the art of cooking. In dress also, especially among women, the law of harmony is fairly well known and practiced, as any audience or street scene will testify. No lady will pin twenty-five bows of ribbon, of different colors, to her gown, but wisely chooses one to enhance the beauty of her costume. Yet, she unhesitatingly places twenty-five pieces of bric-à-brac on her mantel, failing to see that the purpose of ribbons and bric-à-brac is the same—that an overdressed room is just as vulgar as an overdressed woman.

With a room, as with every object, its structure determines the kind and amount of decoration. The colors of the wood-work and walls should modestly join hands in noble kinship. If the color of the paper is in striking contrast with the color of the wood-work, the latter is made too prominent. Then, as in so many rooms, the wood-work is pushed prominently forward. The rugs and furniture must rigidly draw the color line, excluding colors not in tone with the rest of the room. Most of the bric-à-brac must be imprisoned in the store-room, only here and there a piece put up to give a fine note of color or form to that part of the room. Of course the imprisoned pieces will coax and clamour to be let out. Probably each piece suppressed will plead that it is a gift and should be kept exposed to testify to appreciation. But a deaf ear must be turned.

Many persons childishly regard pic-

tures as decoration. They may be, but more often are not. A picture helps to decorate only when it is appropriate to the function of the room, when it is so suitable in color and well proportioned in size to the space in which it hangs that it seems, like Topsy, to have "jess growed" there. Above all, there should be only a few pictures in a room. Too many create confusion.

Every dwelling falls naturally into one of the two classes—museums or homes—according as the exhibition or the decorative principle rules in its arrangement. In fact, one of these principles governs man in his use of all objects which adorn his person or furnish his house. We wear a necktie or a ribbon, primarily because it is pretty or primarily because it enhances the beauty of our costume. If for the former reason we are to that extent walking museums for exhibiting neckties or ribbons. If a house is furnished on the museum principle, it is then usually "cluttered" with countless things to whose number there is no limit except space.

If furnished on the decorative principle the character and number of objects are strictly limited by the law of harmony. Each room is then a work of art.

Whether a home is made up of "show-rooms" or living rooms is not a question of refinement only. Surroundings have an important influence on physical and moral well-being. Hygiene has brought to light many foes hidden in food, drink, and air, and is now pointing out those which lurk in color, form, and sound. This sanitation of the nervous system is coming along the same road traveled by physical sanitation. As formerly, rotting vegetables, surface drainage, and foul air were looked upon merely as nuisances, so ugly forms, discordant colors, and jarring sounds have been regarded simply as unrefined and annoying. Recent investigations, however, tell us that these produce nervous and moral diseases. Hence, the demand for art no longer rests on the mere desire for refined and pleasant surroundings, but on the need for a sound mind in a sound body. Art is a vital factor in healthy growth and development.